

Preparing for Convention

Studying Candidates

- Identify which elections you will be voting in as a delegate
- Identify who the candidates are in each election
- Study each candidate to learn which candidate best represents the views of the voting precinct
- Perform research and form educated, independent opinions (avoid relying solely on the opinions of other party members)
- Delegates should:
 - Attend Meet-the-Candidates events, debates, cottage meetings, etc.
 - Speak with candidates via phone and/or in person
 - Review candidate literature, websites, emails, podcasts, etc.
 - Discuss candidates and issues with precinct residents and be open to input from precinct residents
 - Consider political issues and have questions/comments ready for discussion with candidates (delegates have an unprecedented opportunity to communicate directly with candidates, so be prepared)
 - Check voting records of those who have previously held office
 - Call or email candidates with questions

Studying Constitution, Bylaws, and Platform Amendments

Constitution – Defines the purpose and authority of the organization, duties and authority of its officers and basic principles of operation. The Constitution contains the basic precepts which are expected to have little or no change over time.

Bylaws – Describes how constitutional duties should be performed, how the organization is administered, and the details of operation. The Bylaws are expected to change to meet the needs of the organization in fulfilling the principles set out in the Constitution.

Platform – The declaration of values and principles espoused by the Party.

- Proposed amendments to the Party's Constitution, Bylaws and/or Platform may be presented to the delegates for ratification at conventions (after having first been approved by the County or State Central Committee). By voting on these consequential items, delegates play an important role in the Party's organization and operation in addition to their role in selecting the Party's nominees.
- Any proposed amendments will be emailed to delegates, included in their convention packets, and/or be made available online in advance of the convention.
- Delegates should prepare to vote on proposed amendments by:
 - Reading and becoming familiar with the Party Constitution, Bylaws and Platform
 - Studying proposed Constitution, Bylaws and Platform amendments prior to the convention
 - Asking questions of the amendment author if necessary
 - Discussing amendments with other Party members

- Listening to and participating in discussion of the amendments at the convention
- Carefully considering each amendment and its consequences
- Writing your final opinions on each amendment. If you bring these notes with you to convention, you won't have to try to remember all the details.

Studying Resolutions

Resolution – *A formal statement that expresses opinion or conviction, but which is nonbinding (does not initiate any formal change in rule or law).*

- If a delegate believes that the Party should take a stand or voice a formal opinion on a particular issue, he/she may submit to the Party a written resolution to be presented and voted upon by delegates at convention.
- Any proposed resolutions will be emailed to delegates, included in their convention packets, and/or be made available online in advance of the convention.
- Delegates should prepare to vote on resolutions by:
 - Studying resolutions prior to the convention
 - Asking questions of the resolution author if necessary
 - Discussing resolutions with other Party members
 - Listening to and participating in discussion of the resolution at the convention

Reviewing the Convention Rules and Agenda (or Order of Business)

- Convention rules and a proposed agenda will be mailed to delegates in their convention packets and/or be made available online in advance of the convention. You will receive a Call to Convention postcard a week or two before convention specifying the convention location and the time meetings begin.
- Reviewing the convention rules will help delegates know what is and is not allowed during various portions of the convention. By knowing the rules, delegates can more fully and confidently participate in the convention process.
- Reviewing the proposed convention agenda will help delegates know what items of business to expect.
- Be prepared to vote on standard convention procedures (such as adopting the agenda and rules, accepting the credentials report, etc.) (see “What to Expect at the Republican Convention” document).
- Learning the basics of Robert’s Rules for parliamentary procedure will help delegates understand and participate in convention proceedings.